

Permanency Unit

Broadcast Notebook 2002

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DATE: January 9, 2002

TO: Local Directors, Foster Care Staff, and Department Staff with Interest in Foster Care

FROM: Linda Booth, Foster Care Program Manager

SUBJECT: Foster Care Policy Chapter Now Available

CONTACT: Regional Consultants

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PIEDMONT – Karen Walker, (540) 847-6943, kew996@ piedmont.dss.state.va.us

The latest release of the Foster Care policy (Chapter B, Section III, Volume VII), as well as the transmittal that identifies major changes, are posted on the local agency web site. This version of the policy incorporates state and federal legislative changes made in 2000 and 2001, and it clarifies discrepancies and contradictions in the existing chapter. It also adds emphasis to child safety and reunification considerations. New language is shown in bold. The chapter is in PDF format. When opened, the chapter will open with "bookmarks" on the left that allow the reader to point and click through the sections of the chapter.

Regional Foster Care Consultants have e-mailed an electronic copy of these documents to local Foster Care Supervisors. Due to budget constraints, printed copies are not being distributed to everyone. Each local department of social services will receive one paper copy.

To access these two documents from the local agency page, go to the local agency web site, click on "Divisions," then click on "Division of Service Programs." Under Foster Care/Family Preservation," click on "Policy." The direct address is:

<http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/divisions/dfs/fc/fc-policies.html>

If you would like to read the policy, the computer that accesses it must have Adobe Acrobat installed. To download the latest free version of the Adobe Acrobat application, please use the following address and follow the instructions at this web site:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

DATE: February 14, 2002

TO: Local Directors, Foster Care Supervisors, and Workers

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Director, Service Programs
Linda Booth, Foster Care Program Manager

SUBJECT: **Foster Care Funding Distribution Report- Action Required**

CONTACT: Regional Consultants

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The Foster Care Funding Distribution report, as well as a description, is posted on the local agency web site. This report, dated January 3, 2002, can serve as a guide to help identify and monitor the percentage of foster care children who are eligible for federal Title IV-E. Please review the report to verify case count information in OASIS for your agency regarding funding for Title IV-E and CSA (Comprehensive Services Act). The Department plans to post a report each month.

The Foster Care Funding Distribution report is an Excel spreadsheet that contains locality-specific data on children in foster care, extracted from the department's data base, OASIS, on the specific day identified in the title of the report. The report's data coincides with the number of foster care funding records reflected on the Active Foster Care Children report, which is available on-line in OASIS. Details by child are found on the OASIS Active Foster Care listing. The specific source of the data is information entered on the OASIS Funding Sources screen (Path: Workload, Client, Finances, Funding Scr).

Foster care workers must ensure that the appropriate program category, source of payment and monthly maintenance payment amount are keyed onto the Funding Sources screen for each foster care child placed outside his or her own home, as soon as the information is obtained. Once the data is initially entered, it should be updated as needed. The accuracy of the data on the Funding Sources screen is important for claiming Title IV-E administrative dollars and for tracking initiatives to maximize federal funding.

To access the report and description, click on:

1. ☐ <http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/divisions/dfs/fc/fc-stats.htm>.
At this site, you will find two links: 1) [Description of Foster Care Funding Distribution Reports](#), which includes how to access and interpret the data and 2) the EXCEL spreadsheet report: [January 2002](#).

You can also access the report through the local agency web page. Click on the "Divisions" button on the left side of the page and then click on "DSP Website." Find the "Foster Care/Family Preservation Programs" section and click on "Foster Care Statistics." The monthly Foster Care Children Demographics reports are also posted at this site.

DATE: March 4, 2002

TO: Local Departments of Social Services Directors, Local Foster Care and Adoption Staff, Regional Foster Care and Adoption Consultants

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Division Director and Brenda Kerr, Adoption Program Manager

SUBJECT: Adoption Subsidy and Residential Placements Guidelines

CONTACT: Appropriate Foster Care /Adoption Regional Coordinator

Central: Gary Cullen, (804) 662-9782, gjc992@central.dss.state.va.us

Eastern: Jane Hanckel, (757) 491-3986, jhh993@eastern.dss.state.va.us

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Local agencies should refer to this broadcast for guidance when using adoption assistance payments for residential treatment, as provided in Volume VII, Section III, Chapter C, Agency Placement Adoption. The Department of Education and Office of Comprehensive Services provided input in preparation of the broadcast.

Background

Local Departments of Social Services (DSS) determine eligibility for adoption assistance based on the child's special needs. When a child is determined eligible for adoption assistance, the local DSS enters into an adoption assistance agreement with the adoptive parents. The local DSS with whom the adoptive parents have the adoption assistance agreement (adoption assistance locality) remains responsible for all payment provisions of the agreement regardless of where the adoptive family resides (residence locality). The family's relocation to another Virginia locality, or another state, has no impact on the responsibility of the adoption assistance locality. The only exception relates to Medicaid, as all IV-E adoption assistance children and some state-funded adoption assistance children are eligible for enrollment in their residence state's Medicaid program.

In addition to maintenance payments, adoption assistance policy provides for special service payments to meet the child's needs. Payments for residential treatment are permitted through special service payments provided they are included as part of the child's adoption assistance agreement.

Residential Placement and FAPT Review

When residential placement is being considered for a child receiving adoption assistance, DSS adoption policy provides that payments for the placement may be made only when the Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) in the adoptive family's residence locality has assessed the plan for placement. The purpose of FAPT assessment is to determine whether appropriate community resources exist and ensure that those community-based alternatives have been considered. FAPT assessment in these situations does not involve payment from CSA funds. Rather, the team's expertise is used in the placement decision before payment from adoption assistance is approved.

There have been some recent questions regarding the expectations of FAPT in reviewing plans for residential placements for adoption assistance children and FAPT's authority regarding the decision. Of particular concern is when FAPT reviews a plan for an adoptive family receiving adoption assistance from another locality. When it appears that an adoption assistance child's needs are escalating toward possible residential placement, it is important for the DSS providing the adoption assistance to interact with the DSS in the family's residence locality early in the process. This will allow the DSS and FAPT in the family's residence locality to become familiar with the child and family, and begin conversations about community alternatives prior to the situation reaching crisis level. The DSS in the family's residence locality is responsible for presenting the case to FAPT and keeping the adoption assistance locality informed once residential treatment is recommended. As appropriate and when feasible, a worker in the adoption assistance locality familiar with the family is encouraged to attend the FAPT meeting in the residence locality. This will further enhance coordinated service planning and delivery.

Adoption assistance payments for residential placements may be made only when the placement is reviewed and recommended by the FAPT in the adoptive family's residence locality. The adoptive parents have final authority over whether to place the child in a residential facility. If FAPT has not recommended residential placement, the adoptive parents assume total costs of residential placement.

Payment for Non-Educational Residential Placements

When FAPT recommends a residential placement for an adoption assistance child receiving special education and placement is for non-educational reasons, CSA (Comprehensive Services Act) funds from the adoptive family's residence locality pay the portion of costs related to special education. CSA funds are used only for costs related to the special education component of a residential placement made by FAPT for non-educational reasons. Maintenance and other service costs resulting from the residential placement are paid through adoption assistance.

When a residential placement for an adoption assistance child is approved by FAPT for non-educational reasons, the local school division in the residence locality is

responsible for revising the IEP (Individualized Education Program) to reflect the non-educational placement in accordance with the Board of Education's Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia. This allows the local school division, as a FAPT member, to support FAPT's recommendation for residential placement as the most

appropriate service for meeting the overall needs of the child. The above-mentioned regulations are available at the Virginia Department of Education's website, www.penk12.va.us.

When CSA pool funds are used to pay for the special education portion of non-educational residential placements for children receiving adoption assistance, localities must comply with all CSA requirements. Further information on these requirements is available at the Office of Comprehensive Services website, www.csa.state.va.us.

NOTE: This broadcast, #1647, was originally issued on March 4, 2002. It is being re-issued to correct the link to the Department of Education website.

DATE: March 13, 2002

TO: Local Departments of Social Services Directors, Local Foster Care and Adoption Staff, Regional Foster Care and Adoption Consultants

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Division Director, and Brenda Kerr, Adoption Program Manager

SUBJECT: Adoption Subsidy and Residential Placements Guidelines - Revised Broadcast

CONTACT: Appropriate Foster Care /Adoption Regional Coordinator

Central: Gary Cullen, (804) 662-9782, gjc992@central.dss.state.va.us

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DATE: April 20, 2002

TO: Local Departments of Social Services

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Director, Division of Service Programs

SUBJECT: Virginia's Federal Child and Family Services Review

CONTACT: Foster Care/Adoption and CPS Regional Consultants

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The Children's Bureau of the Department of Health and Human Resources has communicated that Virginia's federal Child and Family Services Review will occur during the week of July 7, 2003. This review is a comprehensive assessment of the Commonwealth's child welfare system, focusing on outcomes for families and children.

The review will examine seven outcomes related to child safety, permanence, and child and family well-being. These outcomes are:

Safety

1. Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
2. Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Permanency

1. Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
2. The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for families.

Family and Child Well-Being

1. Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

2. Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
3. Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

The review will also examine seven system factors to determine the extent that Virginia's system is functioning at a level that promotes achievement of the identified outcomes for children and families. These systemic factors are:

1. ☐ Statewide information system
2. ☐ Case review system through courts
3. ☐ Quality assurance system
4. ☐ Staff training
5. ☐ Service array
6. ☐ Agency responsiveness to the community
7. ☐ Foster and adoptive parent recruitment, licensing, and retention

The review is a two-stage process comprised of a statewide assessment and an on-site review. The state is responsible to complete and submit the statewide assessment two months before the on-site review. The assessment includes:

1. ☐ Analysis of three years of statewide data profiles, transmitted from the Children's Bureau, on Virginia's foster care and child protective services populations. The source of data for these profiles is state reported data from the OASIS system.
2. ☐ Detailed narrative on Virginia's child welfare system. This information will address the seven systemic factors that are part of the review. Sources of information for this portion of the statewide assessment will include focus groups, surveys, policies, and practices.

The on-site review will occur in three local departments during the week of July 7, 2003. Fairfax is one of the sites since it is the largest metropolitan area in Virginia. The remaining sites will be selected in negotiations with federal representatives. The on-site review team will include both federal and state/local members. The onsite review includes:

1. 1. Case record reviews;
2. 2. Interviews with children and families engaged in services; and
3. 3. Interviews with community stakeholders, such as the courts and community agencies, foster families, social workers, and service providers.

The final results of the review will consider information from both the statewide assessment and the on-site review to provide a comprehensive picture of the strengths and areas needing improvement in Virginia's program. For any area in which Virginia is determined to not be in substantial conformity, a Program Improvement Plan will be required. Only after failure to achieve required improvements would financial penalties be assessed.

Ultimately, the goal of the child and family services review is to improve child welfare services and achieve positive outcomes for families and children who receive services.

Under the Department's leadership, Virginia has begun to prepare for this major review and is engaging many stakeholders in the preparations. The Department will be regularly posting information on the localagency web page (click Divisions, then click Division of Service Programs, then click Child and Family Services). The direct link is: <http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/divisions/dfs/CFS.html>

(Improving the lives of children and families . . . because we can.)

DATE: April 30, 2002

TO: Local Directors of Social Services and Revenue Maximization Project Coordinators

FROM: Ray C. Goodwin, Acting Commissioner

Subject: Documenting Children as Reasonable Candidates for Title IV-E Foster Care Prevention

For several years now, the VDSS has voluntarily sponsored efforts to identify local spending that qualifies for federal reimbursement. These collaborative efforts have been extremely fruitful. To date, near 90 revenue maximization projects have begun of which over 50 have submitted bills and have been reimbursed. Claims to date are near \$95 million. Congratulations on your efforts. VDSS is pleased to be able to help you coordinate your local projects.

Many local revenue efforts involve access to the “pre-placement prevention” provisions of Title IV-E. Under this authority, the Federal government provides 50 percent Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for administrative costs (including case management) related to children who are reasonable candidates for foster care or some other form of out-of-home care.

Documenting that a child is a “reasonable candidate” requires one of the following:

- a) An eligibility determination form which establishes a child’s eligibility under Title IV-E; or
- b) Evidence of court proceedings in relation to the removal of the child from the home in the form of a petition to the court, a court order, or a transcript of the court’s proceedings; or
- c) A defined case plan which clearly indicates that, in the absence of effective preventive services, foster care or other out-of-home placement is the planned arrangement for the child. *Please note that the language on the Case Plan Addendum Form (attached) Item 3 has been amended.*

I am advised that local departments and their partners have been complying with this requirement.

The federal government has now issued guidance that goes well beyond the documentation requirements identified above. It is necessary to comply with this new guidance to avoid risking disallowance and unnecessary disruption of needed services.

Specifically, I am asking that the attached Case Plan Addendum be completed for each child who you consider to be a “reasonable candidate” for foster care or other out-of-home placement. We believe that a properly completed Case Plan Addendum, fully supported by documentation in the case record, will comply with the new requirements of federal policy. Make no changes to this form. Any deviation from exact wording contained on the Addendum may disqualify a child as a reasonable candidate and

reduce the federal funding your community is eligible to receive. The LDSS staff will need to sign this form in addition to the local partner's signature.

Federal policy also requires that Title IV-E funding cease when a child is no longer a "reasonable candidate." Thus, the Addendum should be revised when the conditions leading to the initial determination have changed significantly. In order to assure compliance, good practice requires that the needs of the child be revisited every six months and a new Addendum be completed at that time for the upcoming six-month period.

This is effectively a LDSS service planning process. Accordingly, the LDSS will need to be actively involved in the case planning for each child being served. This may be accomplished by participating with the local partner in the planning of adequate service plans for these children.

Again, congratulations on the success of your project. VDSS remains committed to assisting you in your efforts. To that end, I have recently approved the hiring of several new positions dedicated to this effort. We anticipate continued success with this collaborative effort.

Should you have any questions in this regard, please feel free to contact either Rich Wethington at (804) 692-1313, or me.

Attachments (2)

VDSS PRE-PLACEMENT PREVENTION - CASE PLAN ADDENDUM

Child's Name: _____ Case Number: _____

Child's Date of Birth: _____ Is Child in Out-of-Home Care? Yes
 _____ No _____

This case plan addendum must be completed for each child receiving services that provide for the child's safety and well-being and are intended to prevent or eliminate the need for removing the child from his/her home. This addendum must be completed every six months.

A. Eligibility of the Child

Please check which (if any) of the following are present in the case record:

___ (1) An eligibility determination form which has been completed to establish a child's eligibility under Title IV-E; or

___ (2) Evidence of court proceedings in relation to the removal of the child from the home, in the form

of a petition to the court, a court order, or a transcript of the court's proceedings; or

___ (3) A defined case plan which clearly indicates that, in the absence of effective preventive services,

foster care or other out-of-home placement is the only other available option for providing for the child's safety and well being. ***Complete item B if this option is selected.***

___ (4) Child is not eligible for Title IV-E Pre-Placement Prevention for the following reason(s):

B. Documentation of the Need for Pre-Placement Prevention Services

Identified needs that make the child a reasonable candidate for out of home care and issues to be addressed include:

___ No parent or guardian actually, willing, or able to provide care for said minor

___ The child may be at risk to self or the person or property of others

___ Prior history of police, probation, or social service intervention with minor or immediate family

- _____ Reported history of runaway or uncontrollable behavior in the home setting
- _____ Reported history of attendance, behavior, or academic problems in the school setting
- _____ Deterioration in family and/or peer relationships
- _____ Indication of substance abuse/chemical dependency by minor and/or parent or guardian
- _____ History of medical and/or mental health problems within immediate family
- _____ Other (describe and use reverse if necessary):

*THIS DETERMINATION OF REASONABLE CANDIDACY IS BASED UPON INFORMATION
CONTAINED IN THE CLIENT CASE FILE.*

Worker signature:

LDSS Service Worker/Supervisor signature:

_____ Date: _____

PROTOCOL FOR CO-MANAGING CASE PLANS WITH EXTERNAL AFFILIATES

All contracts with external partners that determine Title IV-E candidacy will need to adhere to the following procedures:

- 1) LDSS service worker or supervisor will review the case plan, discuss as needed, and sign as appropriate, recognizing that Federal financial participation (FFP) cannot be claimed before the LDSS worker/supervisor makes the determination of reasonable candidacy
- 2) The LDSS will regularly participate in periodic case review meetings with the partner. In an effort to minimize the burden on the LDSS or partner, the LDSS to attend meetings already scheduled, vs. setting up new meetings.
- 3) Parents or children may attend these meetings, though their participation is not required.
- 4) During May 2002, we will prepare one form for those applicable children to cover the six months of July 1 -Dec 30, 2001.
- 5) During May 2002, we will prepare another form to cover the six months of Jan 1 - June 30, 2002. Both forms will be dated the day the process occurs...no backdating.
- 6) Prospectively, we will require the addendum to be signed at the beginning of every July and January for the upcoming 6-month period, beginning July 1, 2002.
- 7) LDSS and the provider will need to establish communications to ensure that conditions have not
 Changed to the degree to which the child would no longer continue to be a candidate.
- 8) LDSS will keep a copy of the signed service plans and case plan addenda in a file at the LDSS (a single file with the service plan for all children with that partner...vs. seperate files for each child).
- 9) The partner will keep the original service plan and all other case documents at the partner location.

DATE: June 5, 2002

TO: Local Directors, Foster Care Staff, and Title IV-E Eligibility Staff

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Director of Service Programs; Linda Booth, Foster Care Program Manager; Brenda Kerr, Adoption Program Manager

Subject: No Foster or Adoptive Home Rate Increases for 2003

CONTACT: Regional Consultants

CENTRAL - Gary Cullen, (804) 662-9782, gjc992@central.dss.state.va.us

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The 2002 General Assembly did not appropriate increases in funding for foster or adoptive home for fiscal year 2003. Therefore, monthly rates will remain as listed in section 12.1.2 of the Foster Care chapter, as follows:

\$294 for a child, age 0-4

\$344 for a child, age 5-12

\$436 for a child, age 13 or older

\$644 for a youth in an independent living arrangement

For details on the rates, please refer to the Foster Care chapter, available on the localagency web site at:

<http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/divisions/dfs/fc/fc-policies.htm>

DATE: June 19, 2002

TO: Local Directors and Foster Care staff

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Director of Family Services; Linda Booth, Foster Care Program Manager

Subject: New Legislation Requiring Annual Court Hearings for Permanent Foster Care –Action required

CONTACT: Regional Consultants

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Governor Warner signed into law Senate Bill 538, which becomes effective July 1, 2002. This law requires annual court hearings for any child in permanent foster care. It also made other procedural changes in *Code of Virginia*.

PERMANENT FOSTER CARE

In order to comply with the new law, local agencies will need to phase in court reviews of all permanent foster care cases in the next six months. If a permanent foster care case has not had a court hearing within 12 months, the local agency will need to substitute a foster care review hearing for the next scheduled Administrative Panel Review (APR). The local foster care worker will need to submit the following to the court at least 45 days prior to the child's scheduled APR:

1. 1. Petition for Foster Care Review Hearing, district court form DC-554.
2. Foster Care Service Plan Transmittal, district court form DC-552, listing individuals who should receive a copy of the petition and/or be notified of the hearing. These include the child, if age 12 or over; the parents, guardian, or prior custodian; the guardian ad litem; the foster parents; the agency; and any other interested parties the court directs. In completing this form, the local foster care worker should check the one box that is appropriate to indicate what is being submitted to the court.
3. Foster Care Service Plan Review form
4. 4. Foster Care Service Plan

Subsequently, panel reviews will be held at six-month intervals between the annual court hearings. According to section 16.1-282.2 of the *Code*, at the annual court hearings, "the court shall give consideration to the appropriateness of the services being provided to the child and permanent foster parents, to any change in circumstances since the entry of the order placing the child in permanent foster care, and to such other factors as the court deems proper." The primary focus of the annual court hearings is to monitor the child's progress and identify any services the child or foster parents may need to ensure permanency for the child and support for the family. Section 63.1-206.1 (§63.2-908 effective 7/1/02) requires that, "Any child placed in a permanent foster care placement...shall, with the cooperation of the foster parents...receive the same services and benefits as any other child in foster care..."

At the conclusion of the court hearing and other annual court review hearings where the child remains in foster care, the new law requires the court to make a finding whether the local department of social services or other agency holding custody has made reasonable efforts to complete the steps necessary to finalize the permanent placement of the child.

The new law brings the *Code* into compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act, which requires annual court reviews for all children in foster care to assess the effectiveness of permanency planning for every child. Until this new law, the *Code* had not required court hearings after the child had been placed in permanent foster care. However, as long as the child remained in that placement, policy required an APR every six months by the agency.

Over half of Virginia's children in permanent foster care receive federal funding through Title IV-E. Without annual court hearings, permanent foster care cases would lose significant federal Title IV-E funding. Complying with federal requirements will also help to ensure that Virginia successfully passes two federal reviews, the Child and Family Services Review in 2003 and the Title IV-E Eligibility Review in 2004. Failure to pass either of the federal reviews can result in fiscal penalties.

From the federal perspective, permanent foster care is not a permanency option that the federal government supports because custody remains with the local department and the child remains in foster care. In Virginia, permanent foster care is intended only for a child for whom the goals of return home, placement with a relative, and adoption have been eliminated. The child should have a positive relationship with the specific foster parent before the goal is selected. Further, foster care policy requires that the local agency only seek permanent foster care for children age 12 or over, unless the regional office has been consulted.

OTHER CHANGES IN SB 538

The new legislation establishes permanent foster care as a higher priority goal than independent living, mirroring existing policy.

The legislation clarifies that the purpose of a permanency planning hearing is to establish a permanent placement goal and either achieve the permanent placement goal or defer such action through the approval of an interim plan. If an interim plan is approved, a second permanency planning hearing must be held in six months. The court orders entered at the conclusion of the permanency planning hearings must state whether reasonable efforts have been made to either 1)... "Reunite the child with the child's prior family," if the goal is return home, or 2) if another goal is approved, "place the child in a timely manner in accordance with the approved foster care plan that established the permanent goal for the child and to complete the steps necessary to finalize the permanent placement of the child."

New language clarifies that a permanent goal may be achieved earlier in the process than at the permanency planning stage. The legislation indicates that if the initial six-month foster care review hearing results in: termination of parental rights; placement of the child in permanent foster care; or an order directing the agency to provide services to achieve independent living status; a permanency planning hearing in five months is not required.

Instead, the next foster care review hearing must be scheduled within 12 months. The court orders entered at the conclusion of the initial six-month and annual foster care review hearings must contain language that reasonable efforts have been made to place the child in a timely manner and finalize the permanent placement of the child.

DATE: July 2, 2002

TO: Local Directors, Regional Directors, Local Supervisors of Service Programs,
Regional Specialists for Service Programs

FROM: Ray Goodwin, Acting Commissioner

SUBJECT: Local Agency Use of OASIS, #1

CONTACT: OASIS HELP Desk, (800) 223-8846, Option 2

As we continue our efforts to improve child welfare in Virginia, the issues of data integrity and accurate and timely use of (Online Automated Services Information System) OASIS are more important than ever. Local social workers must document all foster care and adoption cases in the automated system, as well as Child Protective Services (CPS) referrals, investigations and family assessments. OASIS contains the official case record, and is supplemented with forms, letters, and other original hard copy documents which must be retained. Data utilized for state and federal reporting and planning are extracted from OASIS; therefore, all case data must be entered into OASIS accurately and timely.

A number of ongoing management and statistical reports are available in OASIS and on the local agency intranet at <http://www.localagency/support/oasis/>. New reports are continuously being developed to assist agencies in monitoring workloads to insure that data in OASIS provides an accurate reflection of the status of agency cases and investigations. Recent and ongoing administrative training is focusing on helping directors and supervisors understand how to best use the system and the available reports within their agency.

Two new summary foster care reports have been placed on the local agency intranet at <http://www.localagency/support/oasis/> and are referred to in this broadcast. Individualized child and worker listings related to the two reports are currently being sent to agencies. The report entitled "Timeliness of OASIS Entries for Children Exiting Foster Care" is precipitated by the federal and state requirement that the discharge from care of all foster children must be recorded in OASIS within 60 days of the actual date. The second report, "Entry Into OASIS of Required Hearings/Reviews for Foster Children", reflects the agency's compliance with the federal and state requirement that foster children have a specified type of court hearing or review every six months while the child is in care. Agencies have previously been notified of these requirements via foster care policy, memos and broadcasts. Local directors and front-line supervisors are urged to review their agency's performance as indicated in these reports.

"Timeliness of OASIS Entries for Children Exiting Foster Care" provides a summary of results from the last four AFCARS periods. The last column identifies the percentage of total statewide errors for which each individual agency is responsible. The column immediately preceding it identifies what the agency's actual error rate is for all four periods. It should be noted that a number of agencies have worked extremely hard to improve their performance in entering discharges from care within 60 days of the actual date. The percentage of errors for those localities may have been high for the earlier periods, and some periods may even show an increase in the error rate due to a period of concentrated "clean-up". However, their

success can be seen in substantially lower error rates for the most recent period. A number of localities have an error rate for the four periods of below 10 percent, and they are to be especially commended for their efforts. These localities are:

Accomack	Emporia	Northhampton
Alexandria	Fairfax City	Norton
Alleghany	Floyd	Nottoway
Augusta	Franklin County	Orange
Bedford City	Fredericksburg	Pittsylvania
Bristol	Galax	Prince Edward
Buchanan	Giles	Radford
Buckingham	Gloucester	Rockingham
Buena Vista	Goochland	Russell
Caroline	Greene	Salem
Carroll	Hopewell	Smyth
Charles City	King William	Southampton
Charlottesville	Lee	Suffolk
Chesapeake	Manassas	Surry
Clarke	Martinsville	Sussex
Covington	Mecklenburg	Washington
Danville	Northumberland	

As seen in the summary report "Entry into OASIS of Required Hearings/Reviews for Foster Children", 59 localities, or approximately half, had an error rate of less than 10 percent. Twenty-seven of those localities entered 100 percent of their required hearings and reviews into OASIS for the AFCARS period 10/1/01-3/31/02 and deserve special recognition:

Alleghany	Cumberland	Manassas Park
Appomattox	Dinwiddie	New Kent
Augusta	Galax	Prince Edward
Bath	Giles	Smyth
Caroline	Hanover	Southampton
Carroll	Henry	Sussex
Charles City	James City	Warren
Charlotte	King William	Washington
Craig	Lee	Wythe

An additional 13 localities had an error rate of less than three percent in the hearings/reviews report, and a number of the state's largest localities were included in this group:

Albemarle	Virginia Beach
Campbell	
Charlottesville	
Chesapeake	
Fairfax County	
Franklin County	
Lynchburg	
Newport News	
Petersburg	
Richmond City	
Staunton	
Tazewell	

We hope that these summary reports and the detailed reports that are being sent to each local agency will help in the evaluation of progress toward accurate and timely data entry in OASIS. Similar reports will be distributed to local agencies after each bi-annual AFCARS submission.

The OASIS Help Desk, at the number given at the beginning, is available for questions about how data should be entered into OASIS. Agencies that have not yet requested an agency support visit for special assistance may wish to do so by contacting Laura Polk at llp900@email1.dss.state.va.us.

Additional adoption and CPS reports will be provided within the next few months in an effort to help agencies assess how well their workers are complying with the requirement that accurate and timely information be entered into OASIS. For CPS, the reports will identify compliance with timely disposition of complaints. For adoption, the reports will be based on finalized adoptions entered into OASIS.

In addition, agencies will soon be receiving lists to assist them in identifying clients who may be in the system more than once and who therefore need to be merged. Until these lists are received, workers are reminded that part of their business practice on an ongoing basis should include a complete search of OASIS and merging of clients wherever necessary and appropriate. If merging is not done correctly, the system cannot provide the complete history of a child's involvement with social services, and purging of abusers cannot correctly occur. Failure to merge has a detrimental effect on data integrity.

As you are all now aware, Virginia's Child & Family Services Review will occur in July 2003. A critical component of that review is statewide data, which is extracted from OASIS. Virginia must begin now to insure that all case data for child protective services, foster care and adoptions is entered into OASIS completely, accurately and in a timely manner.

Date: July 18, 2002

TO: Local Directors, Foster Care and Adoption Supervisors and workers

FROM: Jean Sheil, Deputy Commissioner for Program Operations

SUBJECT: New Legislation Regarding Termination of Parental Rights

CONTACT: Foster Care/Adoption Specialists:

CENTRAL – Gary Cullen, (804) 662-9782, gjc992@central.dss.state.va.us

EASTERN – Jane Hanckel, (757) 491-3986, jhh993@eastern.dss.state.va.us

NORTHERN – Jo Ann Simmons, (540) 347-6250,
jas995@northern.dss.state.va.us

WESTERN – Brenda Street, (540) 676-5635, brs904@western.dss.state.va.us

PIEDMONT – Karen Walker, (540) 847-6943, kew996@piedmont.dss.state.va.us

House Bill 1061 and Senate Bill 130, as passed by the 2002 General Assembly, provide new circumstances under which reasonable efforts to reunite a child and parent are not required and under which parental rights may be terminated. Local agencies should be aware of these changes as related to permanency planning for children in foster care.

The new legislation provides that reasonable efforts to reunite a child with a parent are not required when, based on clear and convincing evidence, it is shown that the parent subjected any child to aggravated circumstances. Further, parental rights may be terminated based upon clear and convincing evidence showing that the parent subjected any child to aggravated circumstances. Aggravated circumstances means torture, chronic or severe abuse, or chronic or severe sexual abuse if the victim of such conduct was a child of the parent or a child with whom the parent resided at the time such conduct occurred, including the failure to protect the child from such conduct, which conduct or failure to protect: (i) evinces a wanton or depraved indifference to human life, or (ii) has resulted in the death of such a child or in serious bodily injury to such a child.

Chronic abuse or chronic sexual abuse means recurring acts of physical abuse that places the child's health, safety, and well-being at risk. Severe abuse or severe sexual abuse may include an act or omission that occurred only once, but otherwise meets the definition of aggravated circumstances.

These new provisions are effective July 1, 2002.

DATE: August 7, 2002

TO: Local Agency and Regional Office Directors, Local and State Staff Responsible for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Eligibility and Services, and Other Department Staff with Interest in Foster Care and Adoption Assistance

FROM: Mark Golden, Program Manager, Division of Benefit Programs

SUBJECT: Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Manual Now Available Online

CONTACT: Regional Consultants

CENTRAL: Donna Wicks, (804) 662-9768,

dpw992@central.dss.state.va.us

Debra Travis, (804) 662-9747, det992@central.dss.state.va.us

EASTERN: Elizabeth Candelario, (757) 491-3993,

elc993@eastern.dss.state.va.us

NORTHERN: Tina Singhas (540) 347-6251,

jas995@northern.dss.state.va.us

Cathy Jolley: (540) 347-6325, clj995@northern.dss.state.va.us

WESTERN: Patricia Whited, (276) 676-5640,

pbw904@western.dss.state.va.us

PIEDMONT: Dianne Roberson, (540) 847-7957,

dmr996@piedmont.dss.state.va.us

Lois Brengel, (540) 847-7947, lmb996@piedmont.dss.state.va.us

The Department of Social Services issued the Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Manual in July 2002. The new manual replaces the Title IV-E Eligibility Handbook issued in October 2001 and the Aid to Families with Dependent Children - Foster Care Manual previously used to determine eligibility for Title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance.

The Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Manual distributed in July is now available on the web. In addition, the web site includes IV-E forms developed for use with the new policy. The new forms are as follows:

1. The "Title IV-E (AFDC) Foster Care & Medicaid Application/Redetermination Form" (032-03-636) which is to be completed by the service worker to provide information needed to determine Medicaid eligibility, IV-E eligibility and reimbursability, and to provide information needed to screen a child for adoption assistance eligibility;
2. The "Title IV-E Foster Care & Medicaid Initial Evaluation Form" (032-03-635) which is to be used by the eligibility worker to evaluate Medicaid eligibility, IV-E foster care eligibility and reimbursability, and to screen non-IV-E foster care cases for initial IV-E eligibility, as required to qualify for IV-E adoption assistance; and
3. The "Title IV-E Foster Care & Medicaid Redetermination Form" (032-03-634) which is to be used by the eligibility worker to evaluate ongoing Medicaid eligibility, IV-E foster care eligibility and reimbursability, and to

screen IV-E and non-IV-E foster care cases for IV-E eligibility in the month the adoption petition was filed.

These forms should be printed from this site, as needed. There are no plans at the present time to stock hard copies. The previous evaluation form, the "Foster Care Maintenance Evaluation" (032-03-148), is obsolete. Remaining stock on hand should be destroyed.

To access the Title IV-E Eligibility Policy and Forms site, go to the local agency web site (<http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/>) and click on "Support" on the sidebar. Once on the "Support Information Center" page, scroll down to the "Forms and Docs" section. "Title IV-E Eligibility Policy and Forms" is the last file listed in that section. The direct address to this web page is:

<http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/support/bp/eligibility.cgi>

If you have any questions, please contact your Regional IV-E Eligibility Consultant.

DATE: August 9, 2002

TO: Local Directors
Local Office Managers
Regional Administrative Managers
Foster Care Supervisors

FROM: David Mitchell, Deputy Commissioner

CONTACT: Ida Bates, (804) 692-1884, e-mail - ihb8@email1.dss.state.va.us
Therese Wolf, (804) 692-1272, e-mail - taw900@email1dss.state.va.us

SUBJECT: New Foster Care LASER Cost Codes

All local departments of social services' (LDSS') expenditures for Independent Living Programs, Respite Care Services for foster parents, and Title IV-E Maintenance and Training are reimbursed through the LASER (Locality Automated System for Expenditure Reimbursement) system. This broadcast provides clarification on recent changes to LASER cost codes and budget lines.

RESPITE CARE SERVICES, INDEPENDENT LIVING, TITLE IV-E TRAINING PROGRAMS

For Respite Care Services, Independent Living (both the basic allocation and special initiatives costs), and Title IV-E Training, new LASER cost codes and new budget lines have gone into effect for fiscal year 2003 (June 1, 2002 through May 31, 2003).

Respite Care Services:

Respite Care Services expenditures provide temporary relief for foster parents with the primary goal to avoid potential placement disruptions. Fiscal Year 2003

respite care funding has been allocated to all local agencies that submitted a Respite Care Plan to the VDSS. Allocations are based on a weighted formula, using the average monthly number of foster children in care and amount of funding utilized in FY 2001. No general pool for respite care funding exists as in previous years. VDSS will reallocate any unused funds to other local departments via the BF-12 process. There is no local match required for respite care.

Respite Care Services expenditures are reimbursed through **budget line 864**. All expenditures for respite care services are to be entered in **Cost Code 86401**, Respite Care – Purchase Services. **Cost code 86402**, Respite Care - Administration is not to be used and will be closed.

Independent Living Program:

The Independent Living Program provides monies for basic allocations, special initiatives, and beginning this year, demonstration projects.

Independent Living basic allocations are based on the percentage of each locality's children in care, age 13 and older, averaged for a 12-month period in comparison to the statewide total number of children in care. Only those localities that submitted a program plan and budget received allocations. Basic allocations are 100% federally funded for fiscal year 2003.

VDSS has also awarded funding for special initiatives and demonstration projects based on approval of program plans and budgets submitted by local departments. Special initiatives and demonstration projects require a 50% local cash or in-kind match.

Budget line 862 is to be used for the Independent Living Program's Basic Allocations reimbursement. **Cost code 86201** is to be used for Purchase of Services and **86202** is used for administration expenses. With this change in cost reporting, local departments now have the flexibility to transfer their allocation between the purchased services and administration cost codes, in accordance with their approved plan, without having to request a budget adjustment.

Budget line 863 is to be used for reimbursement for Special Initiatives and Demonstration Projects expenditures. **Cost code 86301** is used for Purchase of Services. **Cost Code 86302** is for Administration Expenditures. Local departments' monthly expenditures must be related to their approved project plan. Total expenditures must be entered into LASER in order for the local department to receive the maximum possible reimbursement.

Title IV-E Training Programs:

Local departments are reimbursed using Title IV-E training pass-through funds to provide training for foster and adoptive parents and local department child welfare staff. Funding is also available to finance local department staff in BSW and MSW educational programs in preparation for child welfare work.

Budget line 873 is designated for reimbursement of IV-E training-related expenditures. Three separate cost codes have been created to identify specific categories of actual expenditures. Foster and/or adoptive parent training expenditures are reimbursed under cost code 87301; local staff training expenditures are reimbursed under cost code 87302; and local department employee educational training expenditures (employee stipends) are reimbursed under cost code 87303.

TITLE IV-E FOSTER CARE: MAINTENANCE, CHILD CARE AND TRANSPORTATION

Title IV-E Foster Care payments cover local departments' costs for the maintenance, child care, and certain visitation-related transportation for IV-E eligible children. The goal of the program is to provide these maintenance related services in order to reunify children with their parents or, if reunification is not possible, to find another permanent home for the

child. IV-E case records must document the initial and current eligibility of the child in accordance with the VDSS Title IV-E Eligibility Manual.

Budget line 811 is used for reimbursement of all eligible foster care maintenance, day care and visitation-related costs. New cost codes have been created, requiring LASER entries to be based on the type of placement in which a child resides. Cost codes 81101 – 81106, which were based on whether or not the foster care case was entrusted, should no longer be used. The new cost codes and account numbers allow for greater specificity in identifying actual expenditures. This level of detail will improve VDSS's ability to capture information necessary to track the growth of expenditures for specific elements of foster care related to Title IV-E. Actual expenditure data based on the type of placement will also allow VDSS to compile accurate cost projections for future budget needs.

Cost codes 81107, 81108, 81110, and 81111 identify specific child-placement types, as follows:

81107: Children's residential facility, including group home

81108: Non-profit child-placing agency

81110: Local agency foster family home

81111: Local agency therapeutic foster home

Local departments are to report specific expenditures under the placement type. For example, the \$300 annual clothing allowance for a child placed in a non-profit child-placing agency would be entered in cost code 81108, account number 67020. The same clothing allowance for a child placed in a therapeutic foster home would be entered under cost code 81111, account number 67020. Definitions of the account numbers for allowable expenditures are as follows:

Account # 64010: Room, board (food, shelter, basic supervision, a child's personal incidentals, school supplies, and clothing), and basic supervision

Account # 53410, 20, or 30: Transportation (reasonable travel for a child's visitation with family, or other caretakers), based on the mode of transportation.

Account # 67030: Specialized Supervision. The amount paid to foster parents for extra supervision – beyond that which is normally required – of a foster child. Payment amount billed under this account number is the same amount the CPA or local agency is to pay directly to the foster parent. To be eligible for specialized supervision means children must have special needs and require additional care. The child's special needs and need for additional supervision must be documented in the case record.

Account # 62020, 62030: Child Care. Payments for licensed or agency-approved child care are acceptable when: work responsibilities preclude foster parents from being at home when the child in their care is not in school; the foster parent is required to participate, without the child, in activities associated with parenting a child in foster care that are beyond the scope of ordinary parental duties, such as attendance at administrative or judicial reviews, case conferences, or foster parent training.

Account # 67020: Clothing (\$300 annual allowance for clothing per child). The regular monthly clothing allowance is included in account # 64010.

Cost codes 81109, 81120, 81121, 81130 and 81131: **Although these cost codes are set up in LASER, they are not currently active.**

If additional information is needed on any item discussed in this memorandum, please contact either Ida Bates or Therese Wolf.

DATE: August 15, 2002

TO: Local Social Services Directors
Local Child Protective Services
Workers and Supervisors
Child Protective Services Regional Specialists

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Director, Division of Family Services

SUBJECT: ACTION REQUIRED: Merging Client ID Numbers in OASIS

CONTACT: Molly Carpenter, Child Protective Services Specialist
(804) 692-1688, mmc900@dss.state.va.us

OASIS is designed to track individual children throughout the child welfare system. OASIS can connect all past and present referrals, investigations, family assessments, and service cases for an individual child.

Recurrence of maltreatment

A primary goal of Child Protective Services is to prevent further abuse and neglect. OASIS will be used to monitor the extent to which we are accomplishing this goal. This is one of the outcome measures for the federal Child and Family Service Review.

A report of "Recurrence of Abuse/Neglect" by locality is available on the OASIS Support Page of the Local Agency Intranet http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/pub/oasis/reports/CPS/CPSrpt_OASIS_reports.html. The reported low rate of victims with subsequent abuse/neglect could be a reflection of workers not properly merging Client ID numbers for children involved in multiple investigations. OASIS identifies children in different records as the same person when they have the same Client ID number.

What is "Merge"?

Each time a new referral is entered in OASIS, the system assigns each individual client in the referral a new Client ID number. "Merge" is the function used by the worker to tell OASIS that two different Client IDs represent the same person and to change one of them so that the individual has a single Client ID number. (Detailed instructions follow.)

What are you requested to do?

When you receive a referral for suspected abuse or neglect of a child with an existing record in OASIS, be sure to merge the child's Client ID number in the new referral with the Client ID number of the same child in the existing record. If the child has multiple Client ID numbers, merge all of them into a single Client ID number (except for children in Designated Out of Family investigations). Likewise, if the suspected abuser is a client in an existing record, merge the

referral Client ID number for the suspected abuser with the Client ID number for that person in the existing record.

We are working on a two-step process to identify and merge Client ID numbers for duplicate children currently in the OASIS database. First, the OASIS Unit is developing a list of children who are exact matches on multiple identifying characteristics, such as first name, last name, birthdate, sex, and race, but with different Client ID numbers. After giving you an opportunity to review the list, we will program OASIS to merge these Client ID numbers automatically. Then we will develop a list for each locality of names of children in OASIS that sound like the name of a founded victim of child abuse/neglect. We will ask you to review the list to identify those that may be the same child and review the records. If they are the same child, merge the Client ID numbers.

HOW TO MERGE CLIENT IDS

Things to remember

- **If two clients are merged inadvertently, there is no way to undo this action.**
- Merge clients into the oldest Client ID number unless another Client ID number has more detailed and accurate demographic information.
- Do not merge the Client ID for a child in a Designated Out Of Family investigation.
- **The merge process deletes the funding information entered on the Funding Source screen** for each of the clients who were merged. This requires coordination with the Foster Care worker. (See second bullet under "Preparation," below.)
- CANIS ID numbers can be linked but not be merged.
- The OASIS Help Desk is available for assistance and can be reached at 800-223-8846, option #2.

Preparation

- **Review the OASIS record** for each Client ID with a similar name to determine if they represent the same child. If so, determine which Client ID should be retained. Merge clients into the oldest Client ID number unless another Client ID number has more detailed and accurate demographic information. After the merge, the demographic information in this record will

be populated to all the referral, investigation, and case records involving that child.

- **If one of the Client IDs is involved in a Foster Care case**, consult with the Foster Care worker before merging. When two Client IDs are merged, the merge process deletes the funding information entered on the Funding Source screen in the foster care case. The OASIS Unit is working with the development team to correct this problem. In the meantime, it is suggested that workers copy the funding information before merging clients. Once the merge process has been completed, the Foster Care worker will need to re-enter this information into the foster care record for accurate documentation.
- **If one of the Client IDs is in another locality**, consult with that local agency before merging.
- **If a Client ID is for a child in a Designated Out of Family (DOOF)** investigation, do not merge it with any other Client ID. The child must have a unique Client ID for the DOOF investigation in order to meet legal name deletion requirements related only to DOOF victims.
- **If the Client ID numbers have different Social Security numbers**, the merge process cannot be completed. If a record remains open, the worker may access the open record and clear the existing Social Security number. This will enable the worker to proceed with the merge process. The worker will need to retain the Client ID involved in the record that now shows no Social Security number. After the process is complete the worker may once again access the open record to input the accurate Social Security number to be retained for future reference. If neither of the records is open, call the Help Desk for assistance.

Merge process

- Click **Search** from the main toolbar.
- Click **OASIS** from the secondary toolbar.
- **Enter the client's name** and click **OK**.
- **Highlight the Client ID to be retained.** Click **Show**.
- Click **Merge**.
- The selected Client ID number will display in the Merge/Link Clients dialog box.
- **Enter the Client ID number** to be merged into the yellow Client ID field.

- Click **Merge/Link**.
- The Duplicate Clients' Demographic Information dialog box displays.
- The **Client to Retain** section should contain the oldest Client ID number or the client with the most accurate and complete demographic information. If not, click **Swap**; otherwise, click **Confirm**.

An Information dialog box will display stating "Merge Completed".

DATE: September 10, 2002

TO: Directors of Social Services and Revenue Maximization Project
Coordinators

FROM: Acting Commissioner Ray Goodwin

**SUBJECT: Use of Funds Derived from Local Revenue Maximization
Projects**

CONTACT: VDSS Division of Finance - Claims Integrity Unit

Rich Wethington – (804) 692-1313, drw2@email1.dss.state.va.us

Kent Jorgensen – (804) 692-1456, kej900@email1.dss.state.va.us

David Morrison – (804) 692-2336, dmm900@email1.dss.state.va.us

During the past few years, the Commonwealth has experienced great success with the implementation of the Revenue Maximization Initiative. Congratulations to each of you with projects within your locality. These added dollars have proven beneficial in helping to expand and enhance the delivery of many human service activities throughout the Commonwealth.

Due to budget constraints, significant reductions have occurred at various State and Local government agencies. As a result, VDSS has received several inquiries for clarification of the use of proceeds generated from local revenue maximization projects.

Per existing policy, these proceeds cannot be used to supplant costs that were previously funded by other funding sources. This obviously brings up the question “What is supplanting?” From the VDSS perspective, the supplanting language in the contract relates to the locality shifting local budgets and funds that are under the control of the locality merely because revenue maximization funds are now available. In those instances, VDSS's position would be that the Rev Max proceeds could not be used to offset these budget reductions.

However, in instances where there has been a budget cut by the State and not by the locality, VDSS does not consider this to be supplanting since the locality had no "control" over the budget shift.

Accordingly, VDSS has developed a process for evaluating requests for exception to the rule of supplanting. It is attached for your review and use.

Request for Exceptions to Use Revenue Maximization Proceeds

The primary goal of the VDSS Revenue Maximization process is twofold...

1. 1) to identify and claim missed opportunities for federal reimbursement and
2. 2) to utilize these new funds for expanding or enhancing local human service programs, or to develop new initiatives to better meet social service needs, as identified by the locality in collaboration with local partners.

The Rev Max contracts do not allow supplanting, or the use of Rev Max proceeds to cover costs normally covered by other sources. In general, supplanting relates to shifts in locally controlled budgets merely because revenue maximization funds are now available. In those instances, Rev Max proceeds would not be available to offset these local budget decisions.

However, it is recognized that local governments have lost funds from other state and federal sources that are beyond the control of the local government. In some instances, requests have been made to use Rev Max funds to continue with services that would otherwise be lost.

Based on a few requests, VDSS will now accept written requests for exceptions to use Rev Max funds when other funds are no longer available due to circumstances beyond the control of the locality. Requests should address the following:

1. 1) Describe the affected service or support activity that drives this request.
2. 2) Show how this request will expand or enhance the delivery of human service needs within your locality.
3. 3) Show the likely impact that will result absent the approval of this request.
4. 4) Describe the nature of or reason for the shortage (what State or Federal fund source declined and why).
5. 5) Define other efforts taken to recoup from the shortage.

In addition, please state that a) the local Rev Max Oversight Board has approved this request, b) this is a major local priority, and c) the Local Director of Social Services has reviewed and approved this request.

Requests that are approved will meet the following:

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1. 1. This exception is limited to one year only and should not be anticipated as an ongoing funding source. The funding period will begin with either the approval date or 12 months from when you begin spending down.
2. 2. Unspent funds related to this exception must be returned to the local Rev Max fund balance.
3. 3. Capital purchases must have specific written approval from VDSS.
4. 4. The locality must provide a 15 percent match from another funding source.
5. 5. Funds must be used to provide a combination of both administrative support and client services related to the request.

Request should be submitted to the VDSS Division of Finance - Claims Integrity Unit, ATTN: Rich Wethington. Requests will be considered within 30 days of submission.

DATE: November 22, 2002

TO: Local Directors

FROM: Cathleen Newbanks, Director, Division of Family Services
Brenda Kerr, Permanency Manager

**SUBJECT: Title IV E Maintenance Payments Made Directly to
Therapeutic Foster Family Homes Under Licensed For Profit Child
Placing Agencies**

CONTACT: Therese Wolf, Foster Care Policy Specialist

The Department is currently exploring the option of making Title IV-E maintenance payments directly to therapeutic foster family homes managed by licensed for-profit child placing agencies. Currently, the Department is developing a letter to send to licensed for-profit child placing agencies requesting certain information which will facilitate the Department's assessment of the feasibility with moving forward with this maintenance payment option.

If the Department determines this is a feasible option, an additional broadcast will be issued in the coming weeks with guidance on how Title IV-E maintenance payments can be made directly to therapeutic foster family homes.

Please contact Therese Wolf at 692-1272, or,
taw900@email1.dss.state.va.us, with any concerns or comments.